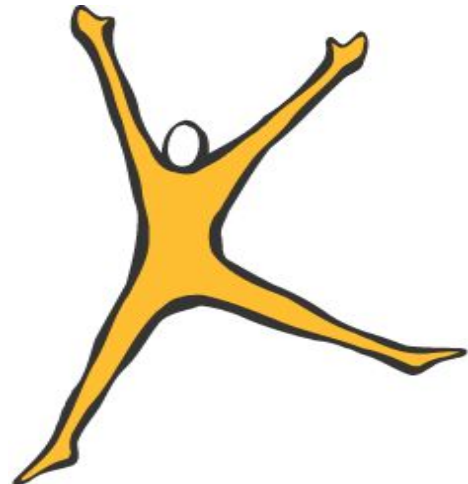




Walk!

Improve
your health,
well-being,
and
quality of life.

**Healthy South Dakota
Community
Walking Tool Kit**



Walk!

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Welcome from HealthySD.gov

Why Walk? Being physically active is one of the best things South Dakotans can do to improve their health. In addition to eating a healthy diet, regular physical activity greatly enhances overall health, well-being, and longevity. Walking is an excellent form of physical activity for most South Dakotans, and is a form of exercise that can be done virtually anywhere. Walking is considered an ‘entry-level’ form of exercise, meaning that most people who engage in a regular program of walking are likely to try additional forms of physical activity.

Exciting initiatives are currently underway to make South Dakota communities more walkable and make walking the easy choice for getting around town. Communities have many opportunities to help their residents be more physically active, by improving access to walkable areas through improved trail and path systems, creating policies that support active lifestyles among different sectors, and community planning efforts that support ‘built environments’ or man-made surroundings conducive to physical activity (i.e. location of schools within neighborhoods to encourage children to walk to school).

Who Should Use This Tool Kit?

The HealthySD program in the South Dakota Department of Health is excited to share this community walking tool kit to help you and your community, neighbors, friends, families, clubs, organizations, schools, worksites, and faith-based communities get started or maintain a regular program of physical activity, specifically walking.

“Research has shown that social support can be an important influence on an individual’s overall health and well-being. It arises from social networks and relationships in social settings outside the family that provide help in coping, managing stress, and changing behaviors such as increasing physical activity. These social networks, which may be newly created or preexisting, foster group cohesiveness and interpersonal bonding between members.” (Source: Social Support for Physical Activity—Establishing a Community-Based Walking Group Program to Increase Physical Activity among Youth and Adults—An Action Guide, Partnership for Prevention, CDC, April 2008)

This tool kit is designed for use by an individual or group with a desire to improve the health of a community through walking. **Intended audiences for this tool kit include local community leaders, volunteers, city planners, civic and service group officers, religious leaders, youth group leaders, community health advocates, policy makers, healthcare providers, worksite wellness coordinators, school leaders, and others with an interest in improving health in a community.** A person described above might identify *several individuals* in a community who could serve as team leaders for several different walking groups within a single community. Or, a single individual might choose to serve as a team leader for a single walking group, for example, a new mothers walking club, a neighborhood walking club, a senior citizens walking club, etc. So, lace up your sneakers, grab your bottle of water, and....walk!



Physical Activity Guidelines and Benefits

Physical activity has many health benefits, and the list of benefits is growing. Regular physical activity lowers risk of early death, coronary heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, colon and breast cancers, and can aid in weight loss when combined with a healthy diet. Physical activity also improves mental capacity and learning, improves self-esteem, decreases stress and anxiety, enhances flexibility and endurance, and improves overall mood, well-being, and quality of life. Weight-bearing physical activity like walking also helps prevent osteoporosis.

Current federal guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend adults accumulate at least **150** minutes of **moderate to vigorous-intensity** physical activity per week. This can translate to 30 minutes per day, 5 days per week; or 10 minute intervals, 3 times per day, 5 days per week. When you are physically active at a **moderate-intensity**, you are working hard enough to raise your heart rate and break a sweat. You can talk, but not sing. When you are physically active at a **vigorous-intensity**, you are breathing hard, and can barely talk. By working at these intensities, you are working your heart at a level to reap health benefits.

MODERATE Intensity

“I can talk when I do this, but I cannot sing.”

VIGOROUS Intensity

“I am breathing hard and can barely talk when I do

2008 CDC Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

- Adults should accumulate **150** minutes per week
- Spread out your physical activity through the week, working at least 10 minutes per session
- Exercise at moderate to vigorous intensity
- Include muscle strengthening 2x per week
- Include flexibility training (i.e. stretching, yoga, Pilates)

The guidelines also recommend **muscle-strengthening activities** to increase bone strength and muscular fitness. Adults should strive for muscle strengthening and resistance activities at least 2 times per week, working all the major muscle groups. You can use hand-held or free weights, resistance bands, gym resistance training equipment systems such as Nautilus™ or Universal™, household items like soup cans or water bottles, or your own body weight for resistance.

Strive for 8-12 repetitions of each muscle strengthening activity, 2 times per week, to reap the most health benefits. Increase the number of sets of repetitions as you get stronger, increasing the weight. For example, perform 1-3 sets of 8-12 repetitions (bicep curls, i.e.) of each muscle strengthening activity, 2 times per week. Seek out qualified fitness professionals in your community for guidance and examples of muscle strengthening activities.

Walking Essentials

Walking is an easy choice for getting your physical activity. Walking is free, environmentally friendly, and is good for your health! In addition to starting a walking program, strive to make walking integral to your daily life, and challenge yourself to increase your opportunities to walk daily. Park farther away from your

Walking Essentials:

- Equipment
- Hydration
- Personal Safety
- Walking Etiquette
- Beginner
- Group

destinations, take the stairs instead of the elevator, and 'walk your errands' instead of driving to them.

With proper equipment, adequate hydration, and personal safety, walking is a smart choice for physical activity. Here are some walking essentials to help you get started:

Equipment: All you need for walking is a good pair of athletic or tennis shoes with proper stability and cushioning. Make sure you have about 1/2 inch of space between your longest toe and the end of the shoe, and choose socks made from synthetic fibers instead of cotton.

Hydration: Plan to hydrate before, during and after walking, especially if you are walking in warmer climates or conditions to avoid overheating and dehydration. A good rule of thumb is to drink **1/2 cup of water for every 15 minutes** of physical activity. Choose plain water, and avoid the sugar-sweetened sports drinks and flavored waters. You'll save calories and money. Whenever possible, carry your own personal environmentally-friendly water bottle (stainless steel, i.e.) and avoid the plastic. You'll be helping the environment at the same time.

Personal Safety: When walking outdoors, be sun smart and always wear high SPF sunscreen. Dress in layers to adjust to varying temperatures. Be aware of your surroundings at all times, and walk in familiar, well-lit areas. It is wise to avoid listening to music when walking so that you are aware of traffic noises, other pedestrians, or pets.

Walking Etiquette: Follow pedestrian traffic guidelines by using crosswalks, sidewalks when available, or if no sidewalks or paths are accessible, always face traffic when walking on the shoulder of the road or street. In winter weather, be extra cautious if walking in snow or icy conditions, always keeping your eyes on the oncoming traffic ahead.

When walking indoors on a track, be sure to follow the posted track direction for that day and heed the instructions on which lane is for walkers, and which lane is for runners. Typically the outer lanes are considered the passing lanes and are used by those running or walking at a faster pace. If you plan to change lanes abruptly, be sure to look behind you first. Many health clubs use timing devices with special colored 'pacing' lights mounted on the walls surrounding the track where you can monitor your pace and challenge yourself. Be sure to ask staff to give you instructions on how they work.

Beginner: If you are new to exercise or haven't been physically active in awhile, there are some guidelines you should follow for beginning a walking program.

Make walking integral to your daily life

- 'Walk your errands' instead of driving to them
- Take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Park farther away from the mall, post office, or grocery store
- Take family walks after dinner instead of watching TV
- Walk down to the neighbors house instead of calling them
- Instead of a coffee break, take a walk break

- Start slowly, gradually adding minutes as you feel more comfortable.
- A few minutes is better than none. Set small goals for yourself initially so that you feel successful when achieving them. Walk to the mailbox and add one lap around the block, adding more as you progress.
- Consider using a pedometer to track your daily steps and use that as a motivator to add more each day. Some organizations have free pedometers. Track your walking program by using a Walking Log or Journal to motivate you. **(See Appendix F for Walking Log)**
- Use *proper walking technique*. This includes maintaining an upright posture, holding your stomach in (tightening your abdominal muscles), striking with the heel and rolling off from the toe, and keeping the arms bent generally at an angle between **45-90°**. Keep your fists 'loose', not clenched. Your head should be in a neutral position with your gaze towards the road ahead of you. Keep your shoulders relaxed and not 'hunched' up by your ears.
- It is important to stretch while your body is warm to avoid injury, so plan to stop and stretch after a few minutes of walking, then continue your walk. See more about avoiding injury and examples of stretching exercises later in this toolkit. A good walking program looks like this: warm-up, stretch, walk briskly, cool-down, and stretch again!
- Always keep your daily physical activity fun and something you look forward to. Examples of how to keep walking fun are changing your route, walking with a friend, walking at the mall or local recreation center, taking a historical walk through your community, or getting off the sidewalk and heading to a local nature trail.
- Consider giving yourself personal non-food rewards as you meet specific goals to keep you motivated. Determine at which milestones you will award yourself and make a list to keep you looking ahead to what 'treat' you get next!
- For extra motivation, consider joining a walking club or start one up yourself. Becoming a team leader for a walking club can help you meet your goals and get others 'walking' the same path towards a healthier lifestyle.

Group: Many people choose to exercise with a buddy or a group for the support, camaraderie, and just for the fun of it. Many people find having an exercise buddy helps them stay on task and maintain their workout schedule.

If you are interested in forming a walking club in your community, whether it is within your local neighborhood, civic or social club, faith-based community, worksite, or just a group of friends, the next section offers some helpful hints on how a team leader can get started. **(See Appendix A for Team Leader Checklist)**

Examples of Non-Food Rewards

- ☐ **New athletic shoes**
- ☐ **Trip to the movies
(pack a healthy snack)**
- ☐ **Try a new fitness class**
- ☐ **Walking magazine
subscription**
- ☐ **Eco-friendly water bottle**
- ☐ **Plan a special weekend
outing**
- ☐ **Purchase a Yoga DVD**
- ☐ **Spend an afternoon at
the library reading**

Forming a Walking Club

As the team leader, there are some tasks and considerations to keep in mind as you organize and get your Club ‘walking’ in the right direction:

- Garnering Support
- Team Organizing Meeting
- Assessing Community Walkability
- Setting Short and Long-Term Goals
- Breaking Down Barriers
- Choosing Your Path
- Club Structure
- Planning a Kickoff Event
- Facilitate Walks or Designate Leader

“Walkability adds strength and joy to the very fabric of community life. Out walking, we meet neighbors, get exercise, visit local shops, enjoy nearby public spaces—and discover reasons to want more of each.”

Walkable Edmonton Tool Kit

Garnering Support: Will you advertise your efforts to form a walking club, or just contact people directly that you think might be interested? If advertising, post fliers throughout your community (places of worship, senior centers, libraries, health centers, coffee shops, worksites, other popular gathering places) announcing the start of a community walking club. You can also place no-cost ads in your local newspapers announcing the club and inviting interested members to a start-up meeting. **(See Appendix B for Sample Walking Club Recruitment Flier and Newspaper Ad)**

Team Organizing Meeting: For your first meeting, choose a neutral, public, comfortable place for everyone to gather. You’ll want to give everyone an opportunity to share ideas and goals for the walking club. As the team leader you can facilitate the group and help the members come to consensus about how the walking club will move forward. **(See Appendix C for Suggested Walking Club Meeting Agenda)**

Assessing Community Walkability: A great introductory topic for your initial meeting is to discuss conducting a community or neighborhood walkability assessment. This might be an effective way to get your members to discuss what improvements could be made to enhance walking areas, what barriers exist within a community that prevent residents from walking in certain areas, and how to move forward in creating more walkable areas. Walkability as defined by The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, Inc. is **“The measure of the overall walking and living conditions in an area, defined as “the extent to which the built environment is friendly to the presence of people walking, living, shopping, visiting, enjoying or spending time in an area.”** There are many Walkability Assessment examples available. Check the Resources and References at the end of this tool kit for a list of organizations that can offer more information on how to conduct a community walkability assessment that is designed to fit your needs.

Setting Short and Long-Term Goals: You will want to set both short-term and long-term goals for your walking club. Will you set goals for mileage (Mileage Club), minutes, steps, distance (city to city), days per week, or a combination of all of these? How long will your first walking program be, 8 weeks, 10 weeks, or 12? Will you also attach weight-loss goals to the overall goals of the group? Once you have determined the time frame for your walking program, you can answer many questions regarding the selected mode of tracking your success. There are many variations in how you can set up your walking program. See the inset box sample for walking program formats.

These are only a few suggestions for how you can determine what type of walking program works best for the members in your group. Consider the fitness level of each participant, personal schedules, and individual goals when determining the program you select. Also determine what motivates your participants to walk. Are they motivated by watching the steps on their pedometers tally up, or would they find motivation in seeing their distances walked charted on a map of the United States (i.e. state to state, or coast to coast)?

Or you can choose many different variations as you complete one program and start the next, giving each member an opportunity to select the next program format. As members reap fitness gains and confidence after completing each program, you may find that your next goals get more challenging. The possibilities are endless!

Breaking Down Barriers: Use your first meeting as an opportunity to discuss barriers to achieving physical activity goals, and offer solutions to each other for removing the barriers that keep members from achieving healthier lifestyles. This will be a crucial step in individual and group success in meeting goals and sticking with a walking program. Many barriers given to avoid physical activity include time, weather, illness, vacations, holidays, family commitments, and work schedules.

According to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, there are many barriers that keep people from walking including *physical environmental; personal, social, and perceptual; and organizational and institutional*; but there are strategies to overcome them. Include this topic of discussion at your walking club meetings and generate discussion about what your members foresee as their barriers to physical activity and walking. Collectively talk through strategies to address each barrier.

Check out the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center website for more information on this topic: www.walkinginfo.org/why/barriers.cfm. In addition, the 2008 CDC Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans also identify barriers to physical activity and strategies to overcome them: www.health.gov/paguidelines.

Walk! Walk! Walk!

Sample 1: 8 week program (3 days per week, 3 miles distance each session, 9 miles total per week)

Sample 2: 10 week program (4 days per week, 40 minutes each session, 160 minutes per week)

Sample 3: 12 week program (5 days per week, 10,000 steps each session, 50,000 steps per week)

Sample 4: 4 week program (3 days per week, 10 laps around school track, 30 laps per week)

Sample 5: Keep it simple...strive for 10,000 steps every day using a pedometer to measure your success. 10,000 steps is generally equal to 2 miles.

Sample 6: What program can you create?

Here are a few common barriers to physical activity to get your walking club started on this discussion:

Barrier: Lack of Time

Solution: Make an 'appointment' with your self on your calendar

Barrier: Too Tired

Solution: Start slowly and notice how walking energizes you

Barrier: Low Walkability

Solution: Determine alternate paths and garner neighborhood support to improve walkable areas

"In many places and in many ways, our society has made it hard to walk. Many barriers discourage people from walking, including those affecting the physical environmental; personal, social, and perceptual barriers; and organizational and institutional barriers. An awareness and understanding of the barriers that influence people's decision or ability to walk are the first steps for individuals, organizations, and communities to make the changes that will effectively reduce or eliminate such barriers." Source: Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center; www.walkinginfo.org

Choosing Your Path: Your group will need to select *where* you will walk. Consider safety of walking paths, weather conditions, and availability of indoor walking areas such as tracks, malls, or community joint use facilities. Check with local community facilities such as school districts or recreation centers to determine if they have allocated times during the week where community members can use the gym or track facilities for physical activity. Will some participants choose to meet their walking goals on a treadmill if they aren't able to join the group? Always refer to the Safety Guidance provided with treadmills and other motorized exercise equipment prior to use.

Club Structure: Will your newly formed group hold regular meetings in addition to your regular walks? If so, determine dates, locations, and goals for each meeting. By holding regular meetings, you may increase and maintain participation in the walking club as you can continue to advertise the walking club to interested participants giving them the meeting as a starting point. You can also use meeting times as an opportunity to provide education to club members. Certainly your walking club can be as formal or casual as you wish! Gauge interest of your members to determine the direction you will take.

Planning a Kickoff Event: Now that you have a group of willing walkers, a set of goals, a route mapped out, and all members know the essentials of walking, its time to *kickoff* the start of your walking program with a big celebration! Contact local media or community organizations to come out and show support for your walking club. This provides an additional opportunity to advertise the group and increase membership. Invite a local certified group fitness instructor to lead you through some warm-up exercises. Invite a key community leader to 'lead' your group on your first walk. Plan a light breakfast or healthy potluck lunch in the park after your first walk. Invite friends and families for support. Plan ahead to have T-shirts or hats

printed for the group to wear at the kickoff. Now, get ready, set, Walk! (See **Appendix D and E for Kickoff Event Ideas and Community Press Release**)

Facilitate Walks or Designate Leader: As the team leader, you'll want to literally 'lead' each walk, to keep the group energized and to provide consistency for members. Or always designate someone to be the leader on each walk—perhaps taking turns among members of the club. Be creative with this! Think of ways to maintain the interest of each member of your club. The next section discusses how to keep the group motivated.

Walk!...Stay Motivated

Congratulations! Now that your walking club is off and walking, you can be very proud of your accomplishments. Remember to track your progress and adjust your goals as needed. Maintain proper walking technique, and review walking essentials periodically. Physical activity should always be fun and enjoyable and something participants look forward to. To add variety and challenge, include different terrains, add hills or stairs, and include circuit training throughout your walk such as squats, lunges, and bicep curls.

Stay Motivated: Think through how you as the team leader can continue to motivate members to continue reaching their goals. These tips from AARP (American Association of Retired Persons—Create the Good.com) offer suggestions for how to keep the group energized and motivated over time:

- Invite a local speaker to talk about fitness and healthy eating
- Find and share articles or web sites on walking and sample walking logs to record progress
- Set weight-loss goals
- Share success stories
- Recognize group members who have lost weight or improved their health by walking
- Make a list of the benefits of walking, post, and review them at each meeting. Mention that walking can reduce stress, prevent heart disease, improve sleep, and help with weight loss.

Your walking club can also encourage its members and others to continue to walk by participating in charity walking events such as 5K's or 10K's (3.1 and 6.2 mile walks respectively) and raising money for a cause everyone supports. Conduct a membership drive and encourage all members to recruit a walker for your next planned walk. Plan walking contests, walkathons, or Challenge events inspired by reality shows that promote healthy competition to inspire and motivate members. Be sure to market your efforts within your local community to garner support for your events and to recognize your walking club.

Use of incentives or prizes has also been proven as a means to motivate individuals to adopt positive behavior. As team leader, consider providing incentives to your walking club members as they reach milestones to encourage their continued participation and help them achieve additional goals. Make sure the

incentives support healthy lifestyles. Ask local community organizations to donate funds or prizes that you can use.

Celebrating and Evaluating Success

Recognizing members for their efforts is a great motivator. Be sure to make time to honor each other's accomplishments and recognize all members for making the commitment towards healthier lifestyles. Continue to refer to the suggested activities outlined in this tool kit to help keep members motivated and on track.

Be sure to share your accomplishments with local media, community organizations, key leaders, and others who can help you celebrate your success and may wish to replicate your walking club within other community sectors. Consider sharing member success stories and highlight them within the community. This will keep members motivated to continue and may also inspire new members to join your walking club.

Now is a good time to refine your goals and get everyone thinking ahead to their next achievements within the walking club. Conduct process and outcome evaluations of the walking club to see where improvements could be made. Based on your evaluation, you can make any adjustments to the walking club, select the next program for the group and keep on walking! Some questions to ask when evaluating your walking club include:

- **Was the walking club advertised effectively?**
- **What was the attendance throughout the length of the walking program?**
- **Did members dropout, and if so, why?**
- **Have members met personal goals?**
- **Have physical activity levels increased and remained steady among members?**
- **What strategies for maintaining group motivation were effective? Ineffective?**
- **Has walkability in your community improved as a result of this walking club's advocacy efforts?**

Additional Considerations for Some Adults

Walking is a an activity that most everyone can do, which makes it such a good choice for physical activity, and one that can be done at all stages of life. The 2008 CDC Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (www.health.gov/paguidelines) provides additional considerations and recommendations for some adults. These are summarized below.

People with Disabilities: Adults with disabilities should strive to achieve the same physical activity guidelines as indicated earlier for the general population if they are able. This includes the recommendations for muscle-strengthening exercises. In consultation with their health-care providers, people with disabilities should understand how their disabilities affect their ability to do physical activity. Some people with disabilities are not able to follow the Guidelines for adults. These people should adapt their physical activity

Examples of Incentives:

- **T-shirts**
- **Pedometers**
- **Certificates of Achievement**
- **Cash\$**
- **Gift Cards**
- **Free Passes to Local Fitness Centers**
- **Lottery Tickets**
- **Walking Equipment**
- **Medals**
- **Ask Your Walking Club Members for Ideas that inspire them!**

***“The bottom line is
that the health
benefits of physical
activity far
outweigh the risks
of adverse events
for almost
everyone. “***

CDC, 2008

program to match their abilities. Studies show that physical activity can be done safely when the program is matched to an individual's abilities.

Older Adults: Regular physical activity is essential for healthy aging. Adults 65 years and older gain substantial health benefits from regular physical activity, and these benefits continue to occur throughout their lives. Promoting physical activity for older adults is especially important because this population is the least physically active of any age group.

CDC states that for adults 65 and older who are fit and have no limiting chronic conditions, the physical activity recommendations are the same as for those of active adults. However, additional guidelines for older adults discuss the addition of balance training to prevent risk of falls. Older adults should do exercises that maintain or improve balance if they are at risk for falling. As with other groups with additional considerations for physical activity, older adults should avoid inactivity and should assess their level of effort for physical activity relative to their level of fitness.

Pregnant and Postpartum Women: Physical activity during pregnancy benefits a woman's overall health. Healthy women who are pregnant or postpartum can and should follow the same physical activity guidelines for Americans. Women who are pregnant should be under the care of a health-care provider with whom they can discuss how to adjust amounts of physical activity during pregnancy and the postpartum period. Unless a woman has medical reasons to avoid physical activity during pregnancy, she can begin or continue moderate-intensity aerobic physical activity during her pregnancy and after the baby is born.

During pregnancy, women should avoid doing exercises involving lying on their back after the first trimester or pregnancy. They should avoid doing activities that increase the risk of falling or abdominal trauma, including contact or collision sports, such as horseback riding, downhill skiing, soccer, and basketball.

People with Chronic Health Conditions: For more information about this specific topic, please refer to the 2008 CDC Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans at www.health.gov/paguidelines.

Avoiding Injury...Stretch!

Avoiding Injuries: Although walking has a lower-incidence of injury than other forms of physical activity, there is always a potential for injury. It is very important to add stretching and flexibility training to any fitness routine or program. Improper form, overuse, undesirable walking paths, and not taking time to properly stretch muscles are all potential reasons for injury. Here is an excerpt from ACTIVE LIVING Every Day, 20 Weeks to Lifelong Vitality, 2001, with regards to avoiding injury when being physically active:

“Nothing can sidetrack your efforts to be physically active faster than an injury. One leading cause of activity-related injuries is trying to do too much too fast. The best bet is to take a gradual approach. This helps strengthen muscles and stretch tendons slowly, reducing the chances of an injury. Knee injuries are one of the most common injuries. You can lower the odds of hurting yourself by strengthening the muscles above the knee, called the quadriceps, and by stretching and strengthening the muscles in the back of your upper leg, which are sometimes called hamstring muscles.”

As mentioned earlier, a good walking program includes a warm-up walk, a stretching period, a brisk walk, a cool-down period where you start to slowly reduce your pace, then followed by a thorough stretching segment.



Stretching: Stretching is very important to avoid injury when being physically active, and to increase flexibility which is a component of overall fitness. It is best to stretch when your muscles are warm, so after a few warm-up minutes of walking. Some experts feel it is ok to stretch cold muscles if done properly and with proper technique. Some of the most common stretches to include in a walking program include:

- **Achilles tendon and calf stretch (heel cord and back of lower leg)**
- **Seated or standing hamstring stretch (back of thigh)**
- **Quadriceps stretch (front of thigh)**
- **Lower back stretch**
- **Pectoral stretch (chest)**

For further descriptions of these stretches, please see the Appendix.
(See Appendix G for Stretching Information Handout)

Flexibility Training: There are other forms of flexibility training including yoga, Pilates, stretch band training, and many others. When done safely and with proper technique, adding these types of flexibility exercises to a walking program can enhance overall fitness and can help avoid injury.

A well-rounded fitness program includes a cardio component where you are raising your heart rate, such as when walking; a strengthening component where you are using resistance to increase muscle mass, such as lifting weights; and a flexibility component where you are practicing a series of stretches to increase overall flexibility.

Cardiovascular Conditioning

-Exercises to raise the heart rate and breathing rate

Strengthening Component

-Exercises to repetitively work major muscle groups using resistance and to increase bone strength

Flexibility Training

-Exercises to increase range of motion in joints and muscles

Walking Forward...

We hope you have found the information in this tool kit helpful and encouraging. Being physically active is one of the best ways to improve your health, and walking is one of the easiest forms of physical activity. Be sure to check out the 'SD Walking Partners and Resources' for additional support and information on where to walk in your community, and special programs to encourage more physical activity. South Dakota has a wealth of information to help you be more physically active.

Please complete and share the enclosed evaluation so that we can continue to revise and adapt this tool kit to meet your needs. **(See Appendix H for Tool Kit Evaluation)**

Finally, we would love to hear about your walking club efforts! Please share your success story with us so that we may compile a directory of community walking clubs as a resource. The information you provide will also help us revise the tool kit. You'll find a template for submitting your success story in the Appendix. **(See Appendix I for Success Story Template)**

For further information about this document or other HealthySD requests, please contact us:

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(605) 773-3737
www.HealthySD.gov



South Dakota Walking Partners and Resources

- **SD Department of Health**
(<http://doh.sd.gov/>)
- **Healthy SD Nutrition and Physical Activity Program**
(www.HealthySD.gov)
- **SD Schools Walk**
(<http://doe.sd.gov/oess/schoolhealth/sdwalks/>)
- **SD Safe Routes to Schools**
(<http://www.sddot.com/srts/default.aspx>)
- **SD Municipal League**
(<http://www.sdmunicipalleague.org/>)
- **SD Department of Game, Fish, and Parks**
(www.gfp.sd.gov)
- **SD State Parks**
(<http://www.sdgfp.info/Parks/index.htm>)
- **SD State Parks Hiking Trails**
(<http://www.sdgfp.info/Parks/Recreation/Hiking.htm>)
- **SD State Historical Society/Local Historic Walking Tours**
(<http://history.sd.gov/>)
- **Wellmark BlueCross BlueShield of South Dakota WalkingWorks®**
(<http://www.wellmark.com/HealthAndWellness/WellnessResources/WalkingWorks/WalkingWorksHome.aspx>)
- **Check your local guides for additional community walking resources and locations of trails**



References

- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans - Be Active, Healthy, and Happy!**
(www.health.gov/paguidelines)
- **Social Support for Physical Activity—Establishing a Community-Based Walking Group Program to Increase Physical Activity among Youth and Adults—An Action Guide, Partnership for Prevention, CDC, April 2008**
(<http://www.prevent.org/content/view/full/158/177>)

References Continued ...

- **AARP (American Association of Retired Persons)**
(www.Serve.gov/toolkits/walk-seniors/index.asp)
(<http://createthegood.org/sites/default/files/WalkingGroup.pdf>)
- **Active Living Every Day, 20 Weeks to Lifelong Vitality, 2001, Steven N. Blair... [et al.]**
(www.activeliving.info/index.cfm)
- **Walkable Communities, Inc.**
(www.walkable.org)
- **Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center**
(www.walkinginfo.org)
- **Walkable Edmonton Tool Kit**
(<http://www.americantrails.org/resources/devel/walkability10steps.html>)
- **The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, Inc.**
(www.Walklive.org)

Additional Walking Resources

- **American Volkssport Association**
(www.ava.org)
- **Smart Growth Online**
(<http://www.smartgrowth.org/about/principles/principles.asp?prin=4>)
- **American Heart Association**
(<http://www.startwalkingnow.org>)
- **American Council on Exercise**
(<http://www.acefitness.org/default.aspx>)

Appendix

- Team Leader Checklist **(A)**
- Sample Walking Club Recruitment Flier and Newspaper Ad **(B)**
- Suggested Walking Club Meeting Agenda **(C)**
- Kickoff Event Ideas **(D)**
- Community Press Release **(E)**
- Walking Log **(F)**
- Stretching Information Handout **(G)**
- Tool Kit Evaluation **(H)**
- Success Story Template **(I)**

Appendix A

Team Leader Checklist

- ☐ Identify yourself as team leader
- ☐ Garner support in your community
- ☐ Advertise formation of walking club (see sample flier and newspaper ad)
- ☐ Plan and hold first club organizing meeting (see sample agenda)
- ☐ Plan a kickoff event (see kickoff ideas)
- ☐ Facilitate walks or designate team leader for each walk
- ☐ Keep club members motivated
- ☐ Celebrate and evaluate success
- ☐ Continue to advertise your club and recruit additional members (see sample press release)
- ☐ Complete tool kit evaluation and fax back to HealthySD
- ☐ Complete success story template and fax back to HealthySD
- ☐ Recruit others in community to start additional walking clubs

Appendix B

Sample Walking Club Recruitment Flier and Newspaper Ad



**For more information,
contact:**

Come on and Walk! with us

There is a new 'Club' in town, a Walking Club that is. We are planning to form a group of walkers who will meet regularly to get out and walk. Please join us! Details below:

Informational Meeting for new
Walking Club

Date: June 1, 2010

Time: 12:00pm - 1:00pm

Location: Downtown Deli, Anytown, USA

Who: Open to anyone!

Bring: Ideas for the club
Walking Shoes

Appendix C

Suggested Walking Club Meeting Agenda

June 1, 2010
Downtown Deli
Anytown, USA

- ☐ Welcome potential members as they arrive
- ☐ 'Meet and Greet' Icebreaker
- ☐ Present information on importance of physical activity
- ☐ Present walking club concept
- ☐ Discuss group goals, needs, wants
- ☐ Set short and long-term goals
- ☐ Discuss community walkability
- ☐ Determine club structure
- ☐ Set date for 'Kick-off' event
- ☐ Assign tasks to members and choose club name
- ☐ Exchange contact info. if members permit
- ☐ Adjourn and go walk!

Appendix D

Kickoff Event Ideas

- ☐ Invite local leaders and media to your kickoff event
- ☐ Hold a healthy breakfast or lunch potluck in the park
- ☐ Invite a local, certified group fitness expert to lead you in a warm-up
- ☐ Conduct a ribbon cutting ceremony as you start your first walk
- ☐ Invite the local school band to play and march as you walk
- ☐ Print matching t-shirts or hats for group members
- ☐ Hold a 'meet and greet' after your first walk to recruit new members
- ☐ Place an article in your local news paper announcing the kickoff
- ☐ Ask your local mayor to lead the group on your first walk
- ☐ Hold a community town hall forum in conjunction with your kickoff to discuss how to create a healthy community
- ☐ Hold a 'new shoe' drive the day of your kickoff for the needy in your community
- ☐ Hand out pedometers to members and countdown to your first step
- ☐ What else can you do at your kickoff event?

Appendix E

Community Press Release

For Immediate Release: Today's Date
Contact: Team Leader Name and Phone Number

Local Walking Club off and 'walking'

Anytown, USA—A local group of individuals are off and 'walking', and are looking for more members. As national obesity rates rise, and physical activity levels are dropping among Americans, one group of committed individuals in **Anytown** are working and walking towards creating healthier lifestyles for its members.

"We all came together with a common goal," says **Your Name**, the team leader for the club. "That goal was to get more fit through walking. We meet M-W-F at 12pm in the City Park, and we all walk together as a group. Not only are we getting healthier, but we also enjoy the social aspects of the club, and the friendships that have developed. Many members have met personal weight loss goals, and have increased their overall fitness. We discuss barriers to exercise, and provide support to one another."

Your Name says the walking club is open to anyone who would like to join, or just meet up with the group whenever they can for a walk. Federal Physical Activity Guidelines from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend adults get **150** minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity per week, or **75** minutes of vigorous-intensity physical activity per week, or an equivalent combination of both. The Guidelines also recommend muscle-strengthening activities at least 2 times per week, working all the major muscle groups. For more information about these guidelines, visit www.health.gov/paguidelines.

For more information, contact **Your Name**. The group is planning on entering the American Heart Association's annual 5K Heart Walk in **Anytown** next month, and are working on increasing their walking goals to meet the challenge.

-30-

Appendix F

Walking Log

Week	Date	Goal... Steps Minutes Miles Laps	Actual	Intensity level... Light Moderate Vigorous	How do I feel?	Notes
Day of Week						
Sunday						
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Saturday						

Appendix G

Stretching Information Handout

Achilles tendon and calf stretch (heel cord and back of lower leg)

Stand two or three feet from a wall or tree with both toes pointed forward as you lean toward the wall, partly supporting yourself with your hands. Keep the heels flat to stretch the calf. Hold 30 seconds.

Seated or standing hamstring stretch (back of thigh)

From a seated position with legs very slightly bent at the knees and hands on thighs, bend over slowly, reaching toward your toes. Keep your head and back straight as you move into the stretch. Hold 30 seconds, and repeat. This can also be done standing, holding on to a chair for support. Place a chair in front of you. Place hands on the top of the chair, step back, place feet together, and slowly start bending forward at the waist. Keep a slight bend in the knees as you hinge or bend forward at the hips. Keep your head pointed down, extending the arms, and stretching through the hamstrings.

Quadriceps stretch (front of thigh)

Place your left hand against a wall or tree for balance, bending your right leg, bringing your heel up toward your buttock. Gently grab your right ankle with your right hand (or pant leg) and gently pull it up and back toward your buttocks until you can feel a stretch on the front of your right thigh. Keep your back straight and your right knee pointing toward the ground. The standing leg should have a slightly bent knee. Hold the stretch for 30 seconds, then repeat with the left leg.

Lower back stretch

Lie flat on the floor on your back with your legs extended, and pull the left knee up to your chest. Bend your right knee slightly and press your back to the ground. Hold the position 10 to 20 seconds, and repeat with the right knee. You can also stand with feet just a little wider than shoulder-width apart. Hinge or bend forward, from hips and place hands on thighs, keeping shoulders away from ears. Inhale. As you exhale, tuck tailbone under and round back, pulling navel toward spine deeply. Hold for 30 seconds.

Pectoral stretch (chest)

Standing tall, feet hip width apart, abs pulled in (navel towards your spine), and arms out to sides. Extend your arms to reach slightly behind you as you open your chest. Hold for 30 seconds.

Appendix H

Tool Kit Evaluation

Your feedback is important to us. Please complete and fax to the HealthySD Program, SD Department of Health, Pierre, SD @ Fax Number (605) 773-5509. Thank you!

Was the information in this tool kit easy to follow and understand?

☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Comments:

Did you use the information in this tool kit to organize a walking club or group in your community?

☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Comments:

Is there any other information that you would have liked included in this tool kit?

☐ Yes ☐ Somewhat ☐ No

Comments:

Please describe the success, challenges, and other descriptive aspects of your walking club:

Please describe your role in your community?

(For example, Civic Group Leader, Worksite Wellness Coordinator, Senior Citizen Program Leader, Volunteer, Health Professional, Other Interested Individual)

Any additional comments:

Contact Information (optional):

Appendix I

Success Story Template

Your feedback is important to us. Please complete and fax to the HealthySD Program, SD Department of Health, Pierre, SD @ Fax Number (605) 773-5509. Thank you!

For your success story, please address: How was your walking club organized?; How often do you meet/walk?; Describe the members of your walking club.; Describe how personal goals were met.; Describe how members stay motivated to walk.; Describe any challenges your walking club encountered.; finally, Describe how your community supports your walking club.

Your Contact Information:



Walk!



Healthy South Dakota Community Walking Tool Kit

For
more
information,
contact:

www.HealthySD.gov

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